

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 NEW DE 11455 271340Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-08 NRC-07 OES-09 SOE-02
DODE-00 DOE-15 SS-15 SP-02 CEQ-01 PM-05 H-02
ICA-20 /153 W

-----093484 280952Z /21

R 271140Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3030
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL MADRAS
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 11455

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MNUC, IN,US
SUBJECT: NUCLEAR ITEMS IN THE PRESS

1. THE LEAD EDITORIAL IN THE JULY 27 "STATESMAN",
ENTITLED "ATOMIC DIPLOMACY", DEALS WITH VARIOUS
OPTIONS OPEN TO INDIA IN THE EVENT OF A CUT-OFF OF
U.S. ENRICHED URANIUM FOR TARAPUR. IT BEGINS WITH
THE PREMISE THAT EVENIF THE 16.7 TON SHIPMENT IS
CLEARED (WHICH IT TERMS DOUBTFUL), "THERE IS LITTLE
PROSPECT OF ANY FURTHER SUPPLY." INDIA MAY
EVENTUALLY BE ABLE TO FUEL TARAPUR BY A MIXTURE OF
NATURAL URANIUM AND PLUTONIUM, BUT ALTERNATIVE SOURCES
OF ENRICHED FUEL WILL BE NEEDED DURING THE INTERIM.
THE EDITORIAL NOTES THAT REPORTS OF A SOVIET OFFER TO
ENRICH NATURAL URANIUM FOR INDIA HAVE BEEN DENIED
AND REFERS TO SPECULATION, PRODUCED DURING FRENCH
MINISTER OF STATE OLIVIER STIRN'S VISIT, THAT FRANCE
MIGHT ASSIST IN THIS FIELD. THE EDITORIAL SPECULATES
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 NEW DE 11455 271340Z

THAT FRANCE MIGHT ASSIST INDIA IN ENRICHMENT OF
URANIUM FOR TARAPUR IN RETURN FOR INDIAN PURCHASE
OF THE FRENCH-MADE DPSA.ON THE OTHER HAND, IT NOTES
THAT FRANCE'S ABILITY TO ENRICH URANIUM IS LIMITED AND THAT
FRANCE DEPENDS UPON THE U.S. FOR 90 PERCENT OF ITS ENRICHED
URANIUM. ON FRENCH NUCLEAR COOPERATION WITH OTHER
COUNTRIES, THE EDITORIAL SUGGEST THAT ALTHOUGH THE

FRENCH HAVE "REFUSED TO RENEGE ON THEIR UNDERTAKING TO BUILD A FUEL REPROCESSING PLANT IN PAKISTAN, THEY WOULD PROBABLY HAVE BEEN HAPPY IF ISLAMABAD HAD DROPPED THE PLAN ON ITS OWN; IT NOW APPEARS THAT GENERAL ZIA-UL-HAQ IS GOING SLOW ON THE PROJECT IN THE HOPE OF OBTAINING A-7 COMBAT AIRCRAFT FROM THE U.S." THE EDITORIAL ALSO STATES THAT THE U.S. IS MORE CONCERNED OVER FRENCH PLANS TO SUPPLY 93 PERCENT ENRICHED URANIUM FOR A RESEARCH REACTOR IN IRAQ, SINCE THIS FUEL COULD FALL INTO PALESTINIAN OR OTHER EXTREMIST HANDS. THE EDITORIAL ADDS THAT FRANCE IS TESTING A FUEL FOR RESEARCH REACTORS WHICH, AT 7 OR 8PERCENT ENRICHMENT, WOULD BE UNSUITABLE FOR AN EXPLOSIVE DEVICE. "WASHINGTON SEES IN THIS A CONCESSION TO THE AMERICAN POINT OF VIEW."

2. THE JULY 24 EDITION OF "THE MAIL" (FROM MADRAS) CARRIES AN ARTICLE BY PRAKASH CHANDRA ON ITS EDITORIAL PAGE ENTITLED "DESAI'S NUCLEAR POLICY MAY STIR UP A HORNETS' NEST." REFERRING TO CONTINUING QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT ON DESAI'S NUCLEAR POLICY STATEMENTS WHILE IN THE U.S., CHANDRA PREDICTS THAT THE PM WILL FACE "CONSIDERABLE TROUBLE" IN PARLIAMENT OVER THESE PRONOUNCEMENTS.ON THE ONE HAND, CRITICS IN THE JANATA AND THE OPPOSITION COMPLAIN THAT DESAI HAS COMMITTED INDIA TO A NUCLEAR POLICY COURSE WITHOUT HAVING UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 NEW DE 11455 271340Z

CONSULTED PARLIAMENT AND THE RULING PARTY. N THE BROADER CONTEXT, HOWEVER, CHANDRA WRITES THAT THE PM HAS LEFT HIMSELF OPEN TO CRITICISM FOR HAVING RENOUNCED INDIA'S OPTION TO ENGAGE IN PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS SIMPLY IN ORDER TO PLEASE THE U.S. THIS STAND HAS PRODUCED GRIST FOR MRS. GANDHI'S PROPAGANDA MILL THAT INDIA HAS SURRENDERED TO THE AMERICANS. CHANDRA NOATE THAT NEWSPAPERS AND COMMENTATORS HAVE CRITICIZED DESAI FOR GIVING UP THE RIGHT TO USE PNE'S FOR NUCLEAR RESEARCH AND THAT EVEN SOME JANATA LEADERS ARE QUESTIONING THE WISDOM OF SUCH A STANCE. HE POINTS TO REPORTS THAT THE INDIAN NUCLEAR SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY IS INCREASINGLY CRITICAL OF THE PM'S POLICIES AND THAT SCIENTISTS AT TROMBAY WERE "SHOCKED" BY THE TRANSFER OF DR. RAMANNA FROM BARC TO DELHI. HE ADDS THAT RESEARCH WORK AT BARC HAS ALMOST COME TO A HALT. IN ADDITION, CHANDRA WRITES THAT IT WAS DURING MRS. GANDHI'S REGIME THAT AGREEMENT WAS REACHED FOR THE SUPPLY OF SOVIET HEAVY WATER FOR RAPP -- AND AGREEMENT WHICH GAVE THE SOVIETS THE "RIGHT OF HOT PURSUIT OF PLUTONIUM" PRODUCED IN THAT REACTOR. THE CONDITIONS OF THE SOVIET DEAL, HE NOTES, ARE FAR MORE STRINGENT THAN IN OTHER

AGREEMENTS WHICH INDIA HAS REACHED, EVEN MORE STRINGENT THAN THE TARAPUR CONTRACT. CHANDRA OBSERVES THAT IF THE SOVIETS AGREE TO SUPPLY ENRICHED URANIUM FOR TARAPUR, THEY WILL INSIST ON SIMILARLY STRICT SAFEGUARDS ON THAT INSTALLATION. CHANDRA CONCLUDES THAT DESAI'S NUCLEAR POLICY COULD PRODUCE A "BACKLASH" AGAINST THE JANATA PARTY, SINCE IT IS TOO GOOD AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE MISSED BY MRS. GANDHI.

3. ON THE SUBJECT OF MRS. GANDHI, CONGEN MADRAS REPORTS THAT THE FORMER PM REFERRED TO THE NUCLEAR ISSUE IN A SPEECH AT A RECENT RALLY IN MADURAI (TAMIL NADU). CONGEN MADRAS REPORTS THE FOLLOWING EXCERPTS FROM A PTI WIRE SERVICE REPORT OF HER REMARKS:

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 NEW DE 11455 271340Z

"MRS. GANDHI SAID THE JANATA PARTY GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN UNABLE TO UTILIZE THE INTELLIGENCE OF INDIAN SCIENTISTS IN THE COUNTRY'S INTERESTS. SUCCESSIVE CONGRESS GOVERNMENTS HAD STOOD FOR TOTAL DISARMAMENT, BUT HAD DECIDED TO GO IN FOR NUCLEAR EXPERIMENTS FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES. 'WE ARE PROUD OF OUR YOUNG SCIENTISTS. THEY ARE SECOND TO NONE. WE ARE PROUD OF THE NUCLEAR EXPLOSION CONDUCTED IN INDIA. IT IS INDIA'S RIGHT AND INDIA'S PREROGATIVE,' SHE DECLARED."

4. COMMENT: THE FOREGOING QUOTED REMARKS ARE TYPICAL OF THE RHETORIC WHICH MRS. GANDHI HAS BEEN USING IN PUBLIC SPEECHES AGAINST WHAT SHE TERMS THE JANATA'S "SURRENDER" TO AMERICAN POLICY ON THE NUCLEAR ISSUE. GOHEEN

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, URANIUM, NUCLEAR FUELS, TARAPUR
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978NEWDE11455
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780309-1155
Format: TEL
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780714/aaaaalqi.tel
Line Count: 151
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 8934d76b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1868308
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NUCLEAR ITEMS IN THE PRESS
TAGS: MNUC, SOPN, IN, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8934d76b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014